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Quartets
of 4 Ch.
by George C.



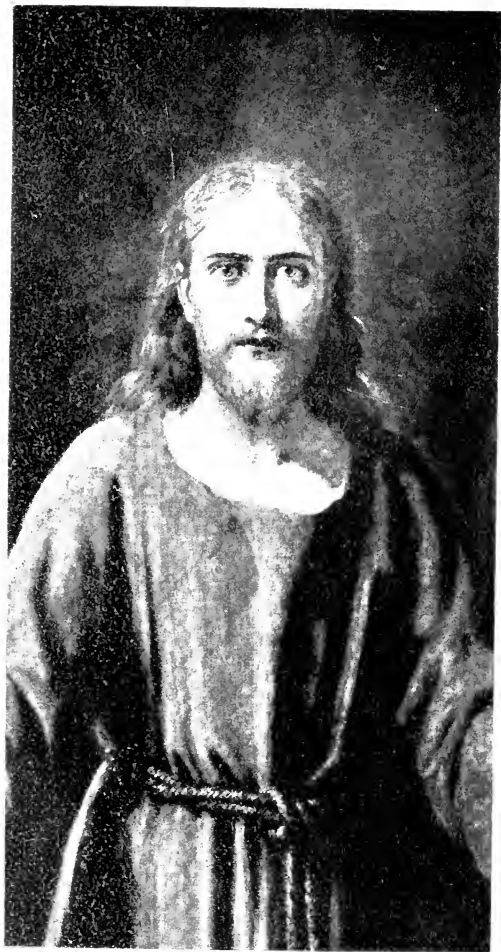


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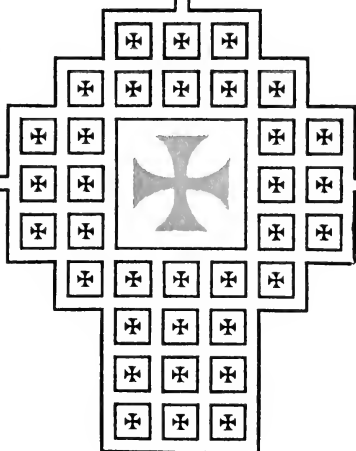




QUATRAINS OF CHRIST

By GEORGE CREEL

PREFACE BY JULIAN HAWTHORNE



PAUL ELDER & COMPANY
SAN FRANCISCO AND NEW YORK



Bend on this wonder world a
clearer eye,
Hark closer to the soul's prophetic cry,
Thrill with the happy song
of growing things,
And read the promise of the
star-set sky.



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TO MY MOTHER
WHOSE TENDER LOVE AND
INSPIRING COMPANIONSHIP HAVE
BEEN EVER PRESENT
PROOFS OF GOD'S
GOODNESS

PREFACE

IT IS strange that the Christian world should have been in need of exactly such a book as this,—that after nineteen hundred years of Christianity we should lack a simple and straightforward reaffirmation of the truth of the Christian faith. Christ has been much patronized of late,—has been coupled in a sentence with Buddha and Confucius and other alleged saints and Messiahs of the past; but a man has been wanting to say that he is nothing less than God in the flesh,—Son of God as well as Son of man,—the Lord Incarnate, come to redeem us from our sins. Mr. George Creel comes forward to supply this deficiency; there is no evasion or compromise in his speech on the subject; his is the faith of the Early Christians, before the sectarians got to work on the plain-spoken, sublime records of the Divine Life on earth; he leaves scepticism on one side, and philosophy and the Higher Criticism on the other, and makes straight for his goal. His belief and testimony are as naif as that of a little child,—except we be as whom, we “can in now wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.” He has little concern with arguments; he appeals to the interior witness of the adoring heart. This is what the world needs, and no part of the world so much as that which calls itself Christian. His utterance is as free from the apologetic note as it is from acerbity and



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browbeating. He has felt the truth himself, deep down in his soul, and he cannot do otherwise than give it forth with all his soul and strength. He speaks not in contentiousness but in love. The living waters have touched his lips, and he longs to have others drink as he has drunk. He holds up the wonderful and radiant story before our eyes, and summons us to receive its glad tidings with worship and joy. The Lord has come down to earth; and through his lineaments, which we have mocked and disfigured, the light of His divinity shines unquenchable; and the very disfigurements are proof of the indwelling and emerging Perfection.

More than a thousand years after the Crucifixion, there was born in Nishapur, in the Far East, a gentle but cynical soul called Omar Khayyam. His experience of life distilled itself in a sort of kindly pessimism, and was embodied in a series of quatrains which lived their day and were forgotten, until, fifty years ago, an Irishman of kindred culture and temperament translated and remoulded some of them into a subtle and musical poem which embodied the eloquent philosophic despair of the last century. But it was not till long after Edward FitzGerald's death that the genius of an American artist, Elihu Veddar, gave his verses fame and wide recognition. The Englished Rubaiyat has ever since been conspicuous on the drawing-room table of



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culture here and in England, and sentimental women and self-indulgent men have echoed his stanzas whenever the roses of their hopes faded, or the pallor of their existence needed wine. "In the fire of spring," they murmur, "your winter garment of repentance fling"; adding that "The bird of life has but a little way to flutter—and the bird is on the wing!" It is a seductive strain, tending to disintegrate moral fibre, and by its attractive expression of a certain indolence of the modern mind, has perhaps done a good deal to discourage whatever remnants of virility were left in contemporary religious thought.

Mr. George Creel was therefore well inspired to attack the enemy on his own ground, and to fight him with his own weapon. The *Quatrains of Christ* are, in form, the Rubaiyat of Omar over again; but save that they are full of veritable poetry, they are as different from them in purpose and issue as light is different from shadow. They are informed with the beautiful wholesomeness of youth, reverence and candor; and they seem to avenge us of the old adage that the Devil has all the good tunes, by embodying in the very lilt and measure of disbelief the fragrance and beauty of true doctrine. There is not throughout the entire little volume one moment of nasal psalm-singing and unctuous exhortation; but there is not a verse in it, either, that is not joyfully religious through and through, and that does not convey an



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enthusiasm of conviction that is both instructive and contagious. Page after page is as though we were listening to Sir Galahad, pure in heart, as he sang in the forest, riding on his quest for the Holy Grail. And ever and anon the singer chants forth an actual phrase or figure from Old Omar, as though a new Moses were to transform the rods of Pharaoh's enchanters into hostile serpents to devour them. If humor were predicable of a poem so serious and vital in purpose as this, I should be disposed to think there was humor in these passages.

The interest in Creel's production, unlike Omar's or FitzGerald's, is continuous from page to page, instead of being confined to separate passages; so that though there is not, in strictness, either argument or narrative, there is a distinct thread of purpose and sentiment from end to end, which we follow with accumulating appreciation. The poet has read his Gospels with awakened and living insight; he has forgotten the commentators and the critics, and gives us the freshness and sweetness of the original story. He has kept it in his heart, and let it grow and fructify there. He has pondered longingly over the silence of the Gospel narratives as to the early boyhood of the Saviour:—

“Did Mary's arms turn childish griefs to
bliss?
Or did His holy mission make Him miss
The happiness of youth's abandonings,
The magic solace of a mother's kiss?”



PREFACE

But he will not repine because no answer is returned to his listening ear. The loving heart can surmise truths which history dare not disclose; and he will listen to his heart,—

“ * * * for as we see
A child, locked in, leap up when it may be
The watched-for, longed-for loved one
comes at last,
So does it leap, O Lord, to welcome
thee! ”

And it suffices to be assured that the Divine mission was fulfilled:—

“ The worm within each rose's heart was
curled
Until Thy mystic might at Nain hurled
Death's menace back upon itself and
stilled
The immemorial wailing of the world.”

I must remember that I am writing not a review but a preface; but what I have instanced will not forestall the reader's pleasure or his interest. He will read this little book not once nor twice only, but will make it his own. It is a new thing in literature; but its appeal is to something deeper in man than the literary sense; it deals with an immortal theme, and shines with the reflection of the joyful dignity thereof.

JULIAN HAWTHORNE.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ I ✠

COME, strike thy harp's most
high, exultant string,
Until its golden ecstasy
shall ring
To very Heaven: thence flaming
down the dark,
Shall thrill dead souls to new, sweet
blossoming.

✠ II ✠

AGAIN a Star dawns in the
Eastern sky,
Again the startled shepherd
lifts his cry,
As waking from his midnight
sleep, he sees
The camels of the Wise Men sweep-
ing by.

✠ III ✠

THE years have worked their
measure of decay.
Where is the inn or stable?
Who can say,
"This is the spot," or "There the
very place
Where Lord Christ came into the
light of day"?



QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



✠ IV ✠

NO MORE chants Caiaphas
his vengeful song,
And scattered to the wind
is all the throng
That clamored for Barabbas, only
held
In memory by reason of their
wrong.

✠ V ✠

THE weak-souled Pilate long
has passed away,
Great Cæsar, too, is now
obstructive clay,
Their mighty Rome forgotten
save as theme
To keep the grumbling schoolboy
from his play.

✠ VI ✠

BUT still the sweet of frank-
incense and myrrh
Steals down the centuries,
and as it were
But yesterday, so sweet and new
it seems,
Did blessed Mary bear the Har-
binger.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ VII ✠

BUT yesterday that through
the stable gloom
An angel shape, with droop-
ing pity's plume,
Swept beaded anguish from the
Virgin's brow
That dewed sin-arid earth to vernal
bloom.

✠ VIII ✠

THOU giv'st to each a price-
less diadem
Of precious gifts, but, ah,
the fairest gem
Is that clear faith, O God, with
which we shrine
The miracle of far-off Bethlehem.

✠ IX ✠

AYE, bless us so, and let it
never be
Like tapestried romance
men peer to see,
Or some old song with meaning
half forgot,
That drowsy children hear at grand-
sire's knee.



QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



✠ X ✠

ALWAYS with sense of vividness — with thrill
Of things intensely present — may we still
Remember this: that human flesh
and blood
Were chosen to exemplify His will.

✠ XI ✠

GUARD us from Habit's
poppied charm, and let
The lotus-laden flight of
Time beget
No far-away, faint half-rememberings,
No spectral shadowing or silhouette.

✠ XII ✠

SHRINK not, but draw in
wide-eyed wonder near
Each incident in all the
Christ career —
From birth to cross there were
no veils or walls,
And nearer makes it dearer and
more clear.



QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



✠ XIII ✠

O VIRGIN, were thy young
eyes unafraid,
Or didst thou shrink, sore
startled and dismayed,
From that first mystic thrill when
thou didst learn
God's precious Burden had on thee
been laid?

✠ XIV ✠

HOUD sang the golden-
throated Cherubim,
And all the wheeling hosts
of Seraphim,
Whose flashing pinions ermined
humble thatch,
And shot with fire the Heaven's
sapphire rim.

✠ XV ✠

WHAT must have been thy
happy, sweet amaze
To see the sudden aureate
halo blaze,
And from the wide-flung gates
of Paradise
Hear mighty harmonies of joyous
praise.



QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



✠ XVI ✠

WERE sweet if knowledge
bridged the gap between
Christ's manger cradle and
that later scene —
Companioned by the elders, gray
and grim —
Full-blossomed youth in favor and
in mien.

✠ XVII ✠

DID laughter bubble as He
leapt and ran?
Was He as others ere His
work began
Of lifting from the World its dole
of doubt,
And making straight Salvation's
tender plan?

✠ XVIII ✠

OR WAS there hint of Pi-
late's fell decree,
The lonely horror of Geth-
semane,
A prescience of thorny diadem,
Or shadow from the hill of Cal-
vary?



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ XIX ✠

DID Mary's arms turn child-
ish griefs to bliss?
Or did His holy mission
make Him miss
The happiness of youth's abandonings,
The magic solace of a mother's
kiss?

✠ XX ✠

NOR, given then the secret
of those years,
Long lapse of stripling days
undamped with tears,
I could come nearer to Him, and
athrill,
Be quit forever of my awes and
fears.

✠ XXI ✠

NAY, Lord, let this not give
offense to Thee,
For if a passion for sheer
nearness be
Aroused by those of earth, then
how much more
When Thou art loved in such su-
perb degree.



QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



✠ XXII ✠

WERE thought of Thee doth
pour into my veins
A leaping flame that burns
the sullen stains
Of sin from out the broidered
Cloth of Life,
Till the fair fabric white and gold
remains.

✠ XXIII ✠

THE marvel blaze that blind-
ed raging Saul,
And held black Herod's
savage soul in thrall —
That swept from Mary all her
silks and shame
And ashed the splendor of her
onyxed hall.

✠ XXIV ✠

NOW doth it rapture fancy
and enchain
Belief and love to marshal
once again
The great, kaleidoscopic surge of
men
Who felt that flame and followed
in His train.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ XXV ✠

BETHINK you of this following! No part
Gave all, nor class — as
mountain torrents start
In spring, they poured from palace, tent and cot,
From sea and field, the desert and the mart.

✠ XXVI ✠

RIERCE Syrians, swart Punic chiefs, and bands
Of blacks, grim Romans
who in many lands
Had seen strange gods, Egyptians, fire-eyed Gauls,
Pale Greeks, and nomads yellowed
with far sands.

✠ XXVII ✠

SO HUGELY great the number, none can tell
How many died in circus
or in cell
For Him who was of their own
day — and still
We yield to Controversy's wasting
spell!



QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



✠ XXVIII ✠

“**F**OR Him who was of their
own day!” Ah, there
We have a sword, all rea-
son-forged, to wear
And wield in swirling splendor
when against
The Powers of the Dark we do and
dare.

✠ XXIX ✠

ITS hilt star-studded by the
mad array
Of gems that ransomed
Mary threw away,
The flaming, ravished jewels that
were Saul’s
When stricken cities knew his ruth-
less sway.

✠ XXX ✠

AND witnesses! Ah, there
was Pilate’s wife
Who pleaded for the Gali-
lean’s life,
And tiger-hearted Herod, over-
awed,
Refused Christ Jesus to the heads-
man’s knife.



QUATRAINS
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CHRIST



✠ XXXI ✠

HO, MARTYRS' blood cas-
cades from ev'ry page
Of history, and Nero's de-
mon rage
Still chills the heart — then shall
our voices rise,
And futile argument our minds en-
gage?

✠ XXXII ✠

AS HOMING birds flee from
the darkling West,
As babes with thrusting
lips seek mother breast,
So do I turn to Thee, thou tender
Christ,
My tear-scorched eyes asmile, my
doubts at rest.

✠ XXXIII ✠

IN LOVING Thee I seek
not Logic's aid,
Nor do I ever ask to have
displayed
Disrupted Science's confusing
page,
O'er writ with guesses restless
minds have made.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ XXXIV ✠

BUT listen to my heart, for
as we see
A child, locked in, leap up
when it may be
The watched-for, longed-for loved
one comes at last,
So does it leap, O Lord, to welcome
Thee.

✠ XXXV ✠

WHEN sing of that they love,
and so have sung
In many ways since first
the earth was young,
So shall I then, in simple fashion,
ease
A heart by lack of full confession
wrung.

✠ XXXVI ✠

SIMPLICITY! No other
way is clear
That may, at end of all,
bring pilgrims near
To Thee, O one white Flower
swaying fair
Amid the blighted blooms of yester-
year.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ XXXVII ✠

NOR worship where pale
priestesses supine
All bloodily adore some
midnight shrine,
No mystic murmurings or stran-
gled scream,
But sound of singing brook and
whispering pine.

✠ XXXVIII ✠

WHEN must the flame-eyed
muse now strip, abashed,
Of flowing, purpled splen-
dors, jewel-splashed,
And take the narrow path in
cooling white,
Her hair the maiden's way, and lily
sashed.

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QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



✠ XXXIX ✠

WHERE Alexander's steel
with all its stains?
Attila's mace that crumbled
haughty reigns?

Alaric's lance or Soldan's scimitar?

The Savior's fadeless palm alone
remains.

✠ XL ✠

O PRINCE of Peace, Thy
argent temple yields
Far richer spoils than e'er
were brought on shields

From sack of Lydian metropolis,
Or plundering of prostrate Persia's
fields.

✠ XLI ✠

THE ancient chains that
weighed a people down,
Oppression's dripping
sword, the prison gown
Of Opportunity, Injustice's red
scourge,
And Tyranny's once awe-inspiring
crown.



QUATRAINS
OF
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✠ XLII ✠

AND over all, like Paradisal
snow,
The petals of Life's roses
drift and glow —
The thorns turned pointless in
Thy heart of hearts,
The blossom for Thy brothers here
below.

✠ XLIII ✠

THE wind that moaned an
ancient pain away
Was soothed of all its sobs
and sick dismay —
Thou gav'st new courage to the
coward dawn
And glad triumphant *guidons* to the
day.

✠ XLIV ✠

FOR fevered living, fret and
pain the price,
Until the oil of Thy dear
sacrifice
Assuaged, and smoothed a hal-
cyon expanse
To mirror the allure of Paradise.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ XLV ✠

THE worm within each rose's
heart was curled,
Until Thy mystic might at
Näin hurled
Death's menace back upon itself
and stilled
The immemorial wailing of the
world.

✠ XLVI ✠

DAYHAP, when Twilight's
sombre hosts parade,
That Terror's tears will
hail the hasting Shade—
Believe it ancient weakness of the
flesh —
My soul awaits Thy call all un-
afraid.

✠ XLVII ✠

BUT will Thou not be tender
of this fear,
As mothers comfort when
the dark is near,
And while I huddle in the haunted
gloom,
Throw wide the gate, and let Thy
light appear.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ XLVIII ✠

IS IT too much to ask, or
will Thy wrath
Be kindled by the creeping
doubt that hath
Its way with flesh? Ah, no, the
dying thief
Was fearful too, and Thou didst
blaze his path.

✠ XLIX ✠

AND as I, kneeling, breathe
my silent prayer,
When weak of heart or
weighted with despair,
I think of how the faithful Simon
once
Did help Thee, weary Christ, Thy
cross to bear.

✠ L ✠

O CRUEL cross and Cal-
vary's wild stress!
A crown of thorns, a clos-
ing tomb, the press
Of traitor lips — what sorry gifts
indeed
To counterpoise unpurchased hap-
piness!



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ LI ✠

BUT it is done! The strange
exchange is made!
Salvation is for all, the price
is paid —

So let us, shriven and consoled,
abide
In meek acceptance of the gracious
trade.

✠ LII ✠

NOT thoughtless joy, nor yet
the thoughtless tear,
Not brazen forwardness
nor shrinking fear,

But aye serene in perfect con-
fidence
Of marshalled love and mercy ever
near.

✠ LIII ✠

WET was Thy disappoint-
ment with its tears,
But one finds not that any-
where appears

Grim Melancholy as Thy chosen
friend,
Or sordid Gloom as master of Thy
years.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ LIV ✠

SO LET us never be afraid
to rise
In sure aloofness from
among the eyes
That shut to light and beauty,
and all blind,
Invoke a broken Christ with sobs
and sighs.

✠ LV ✠

AULL oft must Thou have
paused in greening dale,
And, seeing soul-white
blossoms grow less pale
Beneath a young sun's shycaress,
thrilled deep,
And prayed of God that loveliness
prevail.

✠ LVI ✠

EARTH heard and hid her
scars at Thy command,
Threw viny mantles o'er
the unrich land,
Flung flowers to the waste, and
palms and springs
Companioned to redeem the desert's
sand.



QUATRAINS
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CHRIST



✠ LVII ✠

AND, O love exquisite ! Thou
hast the rose,
The swaying fragrance of
the garden close,
Stand forth as fair, renewing
monuments,
To mark where clean hearts find a
brief repose.

✠ LVIII ✠

OEAR Nazarene, Thou art
the soul and source
Of all true joy. I will my-
self divorce
From gloom, and Death shall hear
a happy song
When he shall reach me in his
sombre course.

✠ LIX ✠

AH, SWEET the world since
to Thy tender breast
Thou gathered all that
darkened and oppressed,
And breathing it with beauty and
delight
Pursued Thy way to Calvary's sad
rest.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ LX ✠

WHAT madness then to seek
what He hath ta'en,
To lift the cup of bitter
wine and drain
Its dregs, or grope to find the
crown of thorns,
All drunkenly infatuate with pain.

✠ LXI ✠

SWEET Jesus, never let me
be afraid
To sing my love in lilting
strain, nor swayed
By such as have no heart for
happiness,
And build their altars in Golgotha's
shade.

✠ LXII ✠

IS good to read the written
tale of those
Who shared His triumphs
and condoled His woes,
And mark the joyousness of sim-
ple faith
That 'lumes the rigor of the gospel
prose.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ LXIII ✠

WHAT better if their words
fell soft as lace
On silken breasts? Or that
they had the grace
Of sylvan silhouettes? A finer
mesh
Would not enhance Truth's never-
aging face.

✠ LXIV ✠

AS MOTHER countries send
a guarded fire
To light a new land's saltars,
O Desire
Of all the World, flame in sad
souls a flare
Of faith from off Thy Pentecostal
pyre.

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QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



✠ LXV ✠

LET fools with much pre-
tense of wisdom scout
The News, and wag their
heads in owlish doubt
Of great Jehovah's all-embracing
scheme
Because there is a Door they stand
without.

✠ LXVI ✠

CONTENT are we, the chil-
dren of His hand,
To watch and wait, nor
blatantly demand,
Assured that in His own good
time He will
Unlock the Door, and let us under-
stand.

✠ LXVII ✠

WITH all the wonder of the
world before
Our eyes, His love unfold-
ing more and more,
Shall we not grasp the Miracle of
Life,
Ere thronging fierce and clamant at
the Door?



QUATRAINS
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CHRIST



✠ LXVIII ✠

I HAVE no gift to see be-
yond the years,
But when repentance came
with helpful tears
Dear Faith accompanied, and has
remained
To guard my soul against recurring
fears.

✠ LXIX ✠

SOO much of rain may fall
and rot the vine,
A drought burn bare the
field, the first-born pine,
Disaster raze the House of Hap-
piness —
Small things to match against the
Plan divine.

✠ LXX ✠

WHEN sleeps the trusting
soul in sweet content,
Faith marshaling its
dreams, and all unrent
By warring doubts and mad un-
rests, then why
Awake and plunge it into vain fer-
ment?



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ LXXI ✠

CHAOS first reigned. Did
star call unto star,
The seas select their beds,
and from afar
The worlds assemble to assign
their swings,
Or did a Master place them as they
are?

✠ LXXII ✠

AND if 'twas God that en-
tered brooding Space,
And gave to everything a
plan and place,
Was it a childish game He stooped
to play,
And, having played, then turned
away His face?

✠ LXXIII ✠

THE queenly seasons, flash-
ingly arrayed,
In tuneful, circumstantial
pomp parade,
And on the carpet-stretch of
splendid days,
The varied wonders of the world
are laid.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ LXXIV ✠

THE singing soul's insistent,
yearning strain
Tells immortality, yet are
there vain
And insolent demands for guar-
antee
That we shall come to live and
love again.

✠ LXXV ✠

IS of His wisdom that He
does not set
Ungrateful doubts at rest,
else would we let
Mad passions loose, and scornful
of this life,
Give over to neglect and evil fret.

✠ LXXVI ✠

THINK you that He who
wakes the vernal seed
From where it sleeps with
death beneath the mead,
Will coldly let His imaged chil-
dren sink
To nothingness, and pay no further
heed?



QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



✠ LXXVII ✠

TODAY will Yesterday's rare
rose entomb,
Ah, yes, but where a hint
of final doom?

Some rest, the trumpet call, a
judgment passed,
And then Tomorrow's new and
richer bloom.

✠ LXXVIII ✠

WHAT mad pretense it is
that fails to hear
The symphony of suns, and
shuts the ear

When through the joyous lilt of
growing things,
The testimony of the sea comes
clear.

✠ LXXIX ✠

LOOK to the singing seed
and sap. The whole
Of nature races to an un-
seen goal,

Where God, the Master of the
Games, hath hung
The high incentive of a human
soul.



QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



✠ LXXX ✠

I KNOW that many are the
tales they tell
Of fearful flames in an en-
during hell,
But ever have they failed to ter-
rify,
So powerful Creation's tender spell.

✠ LXXXI ✠

THE Hand that wrought
with such a sure intent,
And half of Heaven's
hoarded beauty spent
Upon the world, could never
clench to strike,
Or hurl a sightless soul to punish-
ment.

✠ LXXXII ✠

THE message of a day is
altered by
The thoughts of those that
pass it on, then why
Assume God's word uncolored
and unchanged
By all His messengers since Sinai?



QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



✠ LXXXIII ✠

BY PATHS of peril, agony
and shame,
Past coupled menaces of
sword and flame,
Through wolf-fanged centuries
that howled their hate —
'Twas in such way the holy message
came.

✠ LXXXIV ✠

GREAT souls who suffered
silently, and yet
What blame to them if all
the hate they met
Bit passion deep, and charged
their carried words
With less of gentleness and more
of threat?

✠ LXXXV ✠

BUT let it pass. This night
a moon shall rise
To paint a pledge of peace
upon the skies,
And with the splendor of the
morning come
A reassuring sun to kiss our eyes.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ LXXXVI ✠

THE west-wind Ariels shall
gaily spill
Earth's chaliced charm, and
quicken'd by the shrill
Sweet bugles of the dawn, sweep
swiftly on
To fret the frondage of the dream-
ing hill.

✠ LXXXVII ✠

AND ere the burning noon
shall faint and fail
A joy-mad lark shall brave
the higher gale
To sing his love, and jealously
efface
The echoed mem'ries of the night-
ingale.

✠ LXXXVIII ✠

OWORLD of beauty! World
of charm! Where naught
Is left to vagrant chance, or
ever brought
To drear misuse by dearth of
tenderness,
Or e'er a second's lack of loving
thought.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ LXXXIX ✠

IORD, dost offend this simple, hackneyed strain
In pointed praise of that which should be plain—
This poor attempt to garland crumbling phrase,
Somewhat of charm and newness to attain?

✠ XC ✠

OLET me take the world's old worn-out tongue
And crush it to the vague from which it sprung,
Then fashion from the inarticulate,
New songs to vary those that have been sung.

✠ XCI ✠

GET is it not the singer nor the song,
But faith alone—so Ignorance's long
Monotonies may vie with jeweled psalm,
And echo in Thine ear as clear and strong?



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



* * * * *

✠ XCII ✠

AULL oft from out the pleas-
ure groves that lie
About the Vineyard comes
the taunting cry,
“Why toil ye through the pleas-
ant days, O Fools?
Hast ever yet beheld the Master’s
eye?”

✠ XCIII ✠

AH, SWEET the luring
shade at noontide’s heat,
With garland-weaving
Phyllis near, and sweet
The lulling song, the heart-com-
pelling pipe,
The rhythmic twinkling of the
dancers’ feet.



QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



✠ XCIV ✠

THEY chant the sun, the
rose; and dreamy-eyed,
Sing sultans, beauty, wine,
the pomp and pride
That ever tends on Pleasure's
golden court,
Till simple Faith seems very poor
beside.

✠ XCV ✠

AND soft as flower-petals
Chloe's breast,
Its creamy charm allur-
ingly confessed —
Aye, soft as blossoms in a prince's
keep,
Slave-watched, and by Hyblean
winds caressed.

✠ XCVI ✠

BUT solemn night descends
upon the play,
In crashing discord ends
the roundelay —
On Chloe's chilling breast the
roses droop,
And Phyllis sorrows for the van-
ished day.



QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



✠ XC VII ✠

THE night that frightens
idlers brings me peace,
The dusk that scatters
them marks my release,
And so throughout the day I toil
content,
Until the twilight's signal of sur-
cease.

✠ XC VIII ✠

THE Vineyard hath its heat
and hurt, and thin
My cheeks with tears, but
what a goal to win!
And there are Jordan's banks all
soft with shade,
And Kedron's flow to lave the body
in.

✠ XC IX ✠

IS written so upon the
world's great crest,
A million things in Nature
all attest
A perfect law of balance which
makes clear
That only those who work shall
know His rest.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



SIN may with gorgeousness
conceal its dole,
And gloriously garb the
body's whole
In dream-born tissues soft as
Circe's lips,
But only faith can ornament the
soul.



FINER savor has the
beaded brine
That drops from brow to
lip than idle wine,
And dearer far the laurel's sober
leaves
Than gaily flaunting garlands from
the vine.



SO HOLD thy soul to faith-
fulness, nor yet
The ends and purposes of
toil forget,
But through the day keep thou
thine eyes in love
On that dear Heaven where God's
throne is set.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ CIII ✠

NOR some, eyes hard upon
the little place
They plot and potter in,
ne'er raise a face,
Until Death's heavy hand arouses
them
To ring before an undreamt, great-
er space.

✠ CIV ✠

THE Pearl of Peace cannot
be bought by strands
Of gems, or treasure gath-
ered from far lands
Remember Simon Magus failed
to buy
God's gift from Philip of the Blessed
Hands.

✠ CV ✠

SALVATION has no price,
but all must ask
Who would receive the
boon, nor wear a mask
To shield the shame and evil in
their eyes,
And hide a face unbronzed by
worthy task.



QUATRAINS for CHRIST



♫ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

When I look upon the cross
Which sits, as thou art,
'Tis precious to me, that
Thou'rt crucified for me,
For thou art sweet to me,
As thou art,
For thou art sweet to me, as thou art,

♫ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

God, I love thee, and will
Be with thee,
Thou art my life, and
My joy,
For thou art the life, and thou art
My joy,
For thou art the life, and thou art
My joy.

♫ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

Sweetest of all, that I love
And I love
Thou art my life, and
My joy,
For thou art the life, and thou art
My joy,
For thou art the life, and thou art
My joy.



QUATRAINS ^{OF} CHRIST



✠ CIX ✠

THE fevered throng infrequently condoles
With effort-filled defeat,
yet aureoles
Unfair success, but God's dear
mercy makes
All well within the Marketplace of
Souls.

✠ CX ✠

GOD'S mercy! 'Tis the level
where agree
The rich, the poor, the fet-
tered and the free,
And where the slave's entreaty
rings as clear
As some imposing Sultan's haughty
plea.

✠ CXI ✠

GOD'S marketplace! Where
subtly swift and strange
The values of this sorry
world all change,
So that the widow's mite will
buy far more
Than all the wealth of Ophir's gold-
en range.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ CXII ✠

STRANGE, then, that with
it all so clear and straight
There should be argument,
high-pitched debate,
Dark misconceptions bred in
angry hearts,
And swirling mists of controversial
hate.

✠ CXIII ✠

THUS, awe-struck and afraid,
some fear God's grace,
And, crouching, cringing,
fulsomely abase
Themselves, while others scorn
the bended knee,
And harden eyes to look Him in
the face.

✠ CXIV ✠

HE MOULDED suns, and
fashioned seas and land,
He gave us life, and with
His mighty hand
Arched Heaven over all, then
sent His Son
To consummate the scheme His
love had planned.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ CXV ✠

A SON all rest of princely circumstance,
Those glories that the
kingly lot enhance,
And sent along the way of sacrifice,
A path that took no heed of change
or chance.

✠ CXVI ✠

A ND that the humblest
might not miss the clue,
Denied the royal birth that
was His due,
Delivered by a Virgin in the
dark,
Her bed of pain the straw the cattle
knew.

✠ CXVII ✠

S TRANGE, then, that with
this beauty all about
The shining path that
points the one way out,
There should be unrequited wanderings —
Allurement in the sterile fields of
Doubt.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ CXVIII ✠

WHAT midnight madness not
to understand,
To flee the happiness di-
vinely planned,
And in some tangle mow a matted
head,
And boast escape from Mercy's
reaching hand.

✠ CXIX ✠

AND strange that sons of
Thomas still abide
With us on earth, and still
the truth deride,
Because they cannot grasp His
nail-torn hands
And see the blood gush from His
pierced side.

✠ CXX ✠

OSHAME of shames! The
Wise Men saw on high
God's guiding Star gleam
in the Eastern Sky,
And straightway journeyed forth
across the world,
With ne'er a question asked of
Where or Why.



QUATRAINS
OF
CHRIST



✠ CXXI ✠

O STAR, may thy blest radi-
ance ever lend
Its glory to the Heavens
that o'er us bend,
That it may guide us to that holy
place
Where Christ awaits us at our
Journey's end.

✓

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